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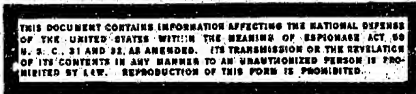
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FUTURE TASKS OF MINISTRY
OF HEALTH RSFSR OUTLINED

The personnel of the Ministry of Health RSFSR and its affiliated agencies convened in Moscow on 26 July 1949. The meeting was attended by members of all the health departments of the republics and oblasts as well as representatives of the larger medical institutes. Among the delegates attending were B. N. Chernousov, chairman, Council of Ministers RSFSR; T. M. Zuyeva, deputy chairman, Council of Ministers RSFSR; V. I. Mayevskiy, deputy chief, health sector, Central Committee, Bolshevik Party; M. G. Anan'yev, Deputy Minister of Health USSR; T. Ye. Boldyrev, Deputy Minister of Health USSR; and M. V. Il'ina, chairman, Central Committee for the Professional Union of Medical Workers.

The first report was read by G. N. Beletskiy, Minister of Health RSFSR, who described the future tasks of the Ministry, as follows:

From all indications, the Stalin Five-Year Plan for the reconstruction of the RSFSR in respect to medical agencies is progressing magnificently.

Additional health problems are mounting along with a steady rise in the birth rate and a steady decrease in the infant mortality rate. One of the most pressing problems facing health personnel is the maintenance of the health of children within the age group of one to 2 years. It is also necessary to reorganize the various institutions dealing with children's diseases to promote further decrease in the mortality rate. Much improvement can be made in the method for caring for newborn babies. Competent doctors should be assigned to maternity homes. The personnel in baby clinics and consultation stations should be increased so that one doctor and two nurses will not have to handle more than 400 babies.

Many unsolved problems still exist in the field of treating traumata in children.

Much can still be accomplished in providing better medical aid to rural populations. One of the first tasks will be to raise the qualifications of surgeons' assistants and obstetricians. It is also desirable that each hospital assistant's post have several beds for the isolation of patients with contagious diseases.

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The general organization and performance of medical institutions in 1948 was vastly improved through measures suggested by the Ministry of Health USSR. However, a cursory glance at the record reveals the fact that more than a third of the health units in rural communities are not equipped with dispensaries for bed patients. In the next few years, it will be necessary to establish this vital bed space to permit an effective control of suppurative skin diseases and gastrointestinal diseases in children. Part of the bed-space shortage can be solved by more efficient utilization of the bed space available today.

Great changes have been brought about in the organization of rayon hospitals. Nevertheless, scores of rayons still do not have hospitals. Many hundreds more do not have dispensaries. It is therefore vital that an expanded building program for additional up-to-date medical institutions in rural communities be undertaken during the next few years.

One of the most important tasks for 1949 - 1950 is the training of qualified medical personnel, assigning them to areas where they can serve best. It will also be necessary to improve the organization of many of the specialized departments in oblast hospitals.

Nineteen forty-nine must be a banner year in sanitation-epidemiological work throughout the RSFSR. We must make sure that the ministries of various related construction industries make every effort to supply sufficient material for the establishment of an efficient sanitation-epidemiological network.

The unification of hospitals and polyclinics has done much toward improving the quality of medical aid available to the population of the USSR. However, today there are still more than 41 percent of the polyclinics and more than 19 percent of the hospitals which remain ununited. It is necessary that an immediate survey be conducted to determine further unification of polyclinics and hospitals to promote optimum medical service.

There is yet another aspect of medical aid which is in need of immediate attention. It has been noticed that in many cases the doctor-patient relationship is not harmonious. In spite of the increase in the number of doctors in various regions (e.g., there has been an increase in Siberia and the Ural regions of one and one half to two times the prewar number of doctors), patients have not been getting any better service.

It is necessary to mention that many of the medical institutions have not been emphasizing the prophylactic aspect of their operations. This fault can be placed squarely on the shoulders of the Ministry and local health organizations. Much can be attributed to the fact that incompetent personnel are assigned to the administrations of local health organizations. Reports from the Ministers of Health from various parts of the USSR reveal that this state is prevalent throughout the Soviet Union. For example, in Arkhangel'sk Oblast more than 13 rayon health units are being governed by nonprofessional men. Fifteen rayon units in Altay Kray are being administered by people other than competent doctors. With such conditions, it is impossible to achieve proper service.

There are various other shortcomings. Inspection of health enterprises and organizations is negligible. There is a shortage of surgeons for treating trauma, osteo-vascular tuberculosis, and urological disorders; tuberculosis therapists; and physiotherapists in health resorts. There also appear to be several instances of complete lack of conformance to the regulations for greater cooperation between various agencies of the health network. Several cases of administrative incompetence have also been reported. It was observed that Asaul'yak of Stavropol' Kray and Vorontsov of Bryansk Oblast were two members of the group of administrators who were most frequently criticized for their bungling.

In conclusion, it is necessary to restate the fact that socialist competition is one of the best methods for achieving improved service, and therefore should not be relaxed in any way.

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